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DEPT FOR AF A A/S CARTER, AF/SPG, AF/C, IO
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ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

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SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT UPDATE

REFS: A) 09 KHARTOUM 191
B) 09 KHARTOUM 142
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¶1. (SBU) Summary: As of February 17 the total number of UNAMID military personnel was 12,611, or 64 percent of the total authorized force strength. UNAMID is preparing for the arrival of the Ethiopian attack helicopter unit and believes it has sufficient authorization from the GOS to begin contracting for construction of additional space for the helicopters at the Nyala airfield. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) On February 16 and 17 Poloff spoke with the following UNAMID officials: Col. Noddy Stafford, Chief of Military Plans; Col James Davey, Deputy Chief Logistics; and Rocky Hoare, MOVCON Officer.

¶3. (SBU) Stafford reported that as of February 17, the total number of UNAMID military personnel was 12,611, or just over 64 percent of the total authorized force strength. Some additional troops arrived to supplement the Senegalese Battalion that will be moving from El Geneina to the Nyala Supercamp and Graida in Sector South. The repositioning of the unit will consolidate the Senegalese into Sector South and will release much needed living accommodations in Sector North. The Egyptian Battalion due to deploy to Um Kadada east of El Fasher is still on track, and they have confirmed March 2 as their arrival date. The Ethiopian Multi Role Logistics Unit has settled into El Geneina and is receiving their equipment.

¶4. (SBU) Load lists are still absent from the Senegalese Battalion 2 and Burkina Faso Battalion 1. The Tanzania Battalion 1 has scheduled their pre-deployment visit and are ready for the joint UNAMID/UNHQ visit to determine if their equipment meets UN standards. While the load list for the Thai Battalion 1 has not been delivered, the Sudanese Tribune reported on February 14 that the Thai government announced it will send the troops in June.

Ethiopian Helicopter Update

¶5. (SBU) UNAMID is preparing paperwork for the arrival of the Ethiopian attack helicopter unit. UNAMID revised and resubmitted a force requirements report from DPKO last week to correctly reflect equipment and personnel requirements. The Chinese Engineering Company in Nyala tentatively is tasked to perform the engineering and construction work for the helicopter facilities. The Chinese unit agreed to use the old PAE compound and equipment in Nyala, rather than create their own camp, freeing up their time to construct the helicopter facilities at the Nyala airfield.

¶16. (SBU) Stafford explained that it was not possible to start construction sooner due to the fact that UNAMID priorities have been to build facilities for units that are in-bound or are already on the ground. The Ethiopians have yet to give definite confirmation of acceptance, so other priorities took precedence. UNAMID said it confirmed GOS approval of its expansion project at the Nyala airfield at the United Nations-African Union-GoS tripartite meeting on February 18 in Khartoum.

¶17. (SBU) Stafford voiced concern over the unit's potential operational inability to perform close air support (CAS) due to a lack of available UHF communications infrastructure. The helicopters will be operating and potentially firing in close proximity to ground troops so these infantry battalions, reconnaissance, and reserve companies must have the ability to perform ground-to-air communications. Forward air controllers need to be able to designate targets on the ground to avoid friendly-fire incidents. Stafford and other senior UNAMID staff are hoping to address this deficiency over time but likely will not have the radio assets in place before the Ethiopian helicopters arrive.

The Shipping Pipeline

¶18. (SBU) Stafford characterized the shipping pipeline as "working quite well". Contractors are moving equipment for the Egyptian Battalion 1 from Port Sudan to Nyala, which will allow the remaining 200 members of the battalion to arrive in March and begin construction on their camp in Ed Al Fursan in West Darfur. The back-log of equipment has been largely cleared from Nyala, and the GoS is providing security escorts as requested.

¶19. (SBU) UNAMID is moving forward with the early deployment of the Nepalese Special Forces Unit. The unit was scheduled to arrive in August, but arrangements are being made to push for an earlier date. Stafford characterized the unit's logistics skills as "impressive".

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They appear to have bypassed Nepalese political restrictions by having equipment delivered directly into Sudan instead of the usual procedure of consolidating the equipment in the contingent country prior to movement. So far, 16 Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) and 65 Toyotas are included in the equipment already in Port Sudan.

However, Col Davey, Deputy Chief of Logistics, is concerned the unit's operational readiness may be impeded by their non-standardized equipment. While he lauded the fact that one country is able to provide both a Formed Police Unit (FPU) as well as a military unit, the equipment they ordered comes from different manufacturers and will require a different training and maintenance considerations. Of the 16 APCs in country, 10 scheduled for the FPU are from the Czech Republic while the APCs for the military unit are Chinese. The Czech APCs have been waiting in Port Sudan for four months until trainers can deploy to teach the Nepalese how to operate them. The Nepalese have not yet determined how they will train their military personnel on the Chinese APCs.

L-100 Contract and the new El Geneina Runway

¶110. (SBU) Rocky Hoare, MOVCON official, praised the Department of State-funded L-100 contract, but the aircraft encountered a technical problem when a faulty gear box shut down its operations on February 13. The aircraft is presently in Khartoum, but may need to be transported to Entebbe for repairs or engine change. The four IL 76 aircraft continue to run smoothly and will continue the flow of more than 300 containers, vehicles, ammunition and weapons from El Obeid and Port Sudan into Darfur.

¶111. (SBU) UNAMID will not be able to use the new El Geneina runway in the near future. UN aviation experts visited the airfield and assessed the facilities. The tarmac asphalt is only 7.5 centimeters thick, and the limited number of aircraft that have already landed have dented the surface. The experts claim the airfield will have to be overhauled and another layer of asphalt added. Another operational concern is that the runway is only 35 meters wide instead of the standard 50 meters. A lack of lighting will limit usage to daytime operations only. UNAMID estimates they will need to re-surface the runway and usage will be "unlikely" within the

next six months. Even with the anticipated renovations, the runway is not on the list of SCAA-approved runways and that clearance may be another obstacle post-completion.

¶12. (SBU) UNAMID's Priority of Movement is presently: 1) Nigerian FPU tents; 2) Egypt Battalion 2 equipment.

Visit to Muhajeria and Labado

¶13. (SBU) The February 9-12 trip to assess the outcome of recent violence in the area revealed perimeter security in most camps to be "woefully short." Stafford reported gaps in concertina wire and that Hesco earth barriers were almost completely absent (only 50 meters of Hesco barriers were completed at the team site in Muhajeria.) He said it would take a "major engineering effort" to reinforce them. (Note: The Nigerian battalions have not been as active in digging trenches and filling Hesco barriers as other battalions. This is a problem that UNAMID is aware of internally, but thus far FC Agwai, who is from Nigeria, has not been able to resolve. UNAMID may have to send contractors to poorly-secured team sites to complete this ground work that the infantry troops are unwilling to complete themselves. End note.)_

APCs

¶14. (SBU) By June 10 new Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) APCs will have arrived in Darfur, and Canada will take back the same number of their APCs. Canada was originally due to take them back by December, but allowed the vehicles to remain an additional six months until COE replacements arrived. The Senegalese are providing 22 APCs, the Rwandans will provide 20, and the Egyptians 62. The Canadian APCs were all the same manufacture, so maintenance has been consistent, though the old Canadian APCs had plenty of mechanical problems. The incoming APCs will be of 6 or more different types and each country will now be responsible for their own training and maintenance. UNAMID anticipates a steep learning curve, but the newer equipment may perform better initially.

FERNANDEZ